

Ms. HASSAN. Before I wrap up, I just want to point out what you just heard—what the American people have just heard—is talking points straight out of Big Oil's playbook.

A gas tax holiday is a commonsense solution that would provide immediate relief for Granite Staters and Americans all over the country. Big Oil holds thousands of unused permits at their fingertips that they could use right now to increase supply. Instead, what is happening is Big Oil is padding its pockets at the expense of Americans.

Let's be clear. This would not take a dime out of the highway trust fund because this bill instructs Treasury to replenish the trust fund, something it has done half a dozen times in about the last decade. This is something that has bipartisan support across the country—Democratic and Republican Governors, Democratic and Republican legislators are moving to suspend their gas taxes. This is something we could do right now to help American families balance their budgets and make ends meet.

While I am disappointed to see my colleague block this critical legislation, I will keep working to bring down costs for American families and get this bill passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the Jackson nomination expire at 1:45 p.m. today.

For the information of the Senate, there will be a rollcall vote at 1:45 p.m. today on confirmation of the nomination of Ketanji Brown Jackson to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Senators are encouraged to be seated prior to the start of the vote and are encouraged to cast their vote from their desks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The Senator from Louisiana.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise to speak about saving school choice or, perhaps, parental choice.

Some students learn differently than others do. I am the parent of a child with dyslexia. I can tell you that any such parent knows one-size-fits-all education does not work.

Parents and students should have the ability to choose the learning environment that is best for that child, and I think the parent can make the choice better than the school board and certainly better than bureaucrats in the Department of Education here in Washington, DC.

The charter school program was created by Congress for that exact purpose: To ensure that parents could choose what is best for their child. Power to the parent. Giving parents the power is crucial to allowing every student to succeed.

Unfortunately, there are groups working to undermine the power the

parent should have to choose their child's school.

The U.S. Department of Education has decided to disregard what is in the best interest of the student with a new proposed rule that adds new requirements for applicants completely unrelated to student outcomes. Applicants would have to demonstrate an unmet need for a charter school, provide evidence of overenrollment at existing public schools in order to establish a charter school.

It seems as if the Department of Education is putting up arbitrary barriers to opening a charter school simply out of prejudice. They don't want the parent to have the power.

Our country's charter schools are under threat from the far left and from teachers unions who seek to shut them down because charter school staffs are difficult to unionize.

Now, these unions know it is much harder to spread their influence in charter schools; and in some cases, it is, frankly, impossible for a charter school to unionize. And the giant unions see this as a simple problem. They know the more charter schools there are, the less revenue they get. So their solution is equally as simple, take power away from parents with layers of new bureaucracy and government regulation. We should not let that happen.

And let's just put this in perspective. Since the pandemic began, it has been public charter schools that have seen a substantial increase in demand. They opened up sooner, and they stayed open in larger numbers than traditional public schools. And we know that open schools are better for children. Parents should have the power to send their child to a school where they feel like they, the parent, have a voice, and where they know their child is more likely to succeed.

Now, let's be clear who this rule is written for—not for the parent and not for the child. It is not written to help the student. It is written to help unions exercise more control over a student's life. This rule makes no mention of how many of these new restrictions improve student achievement or actually help students. And at a time when students are falling behind in record numbers, we need new and innovative approaches to our education system, not just hand the keys over to a special interest group. The truth is, these rules give less choice to families, will hold students back, and do more harm than good.

Now, the charter school program has enjoyed bipartisan support for nearly 30 years. Any substantial change to the program should go through Congress and receive thoughtful consideration. And parent choice for the school their child attends should not be gutted by an informal committee of union employees and education department officials.

Those of us who care about the student, those of us who see the role of

charter schools, we have one message to Secretary of Education Cardona: Back off of our charter schools.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT J. WRIGHT

Mr. President, I want to take a moment to recognize the career of a beloved and trusted Louisiana journalist, radio host, and friend to all, Robert J. Wright of Shreveport, LA. After 50 years of radio, Robert announced he retires later this month. His last day is Friday, April 29, 1 day after his 70th birthday—a well-earned retirement. Robert is a masterful storyteller and a critical thinker, always finding the other side of a story. He has been a voice of reason and always looking for the truth. He took his first job in radio while attending LSU Shreveport. As he says: "It was indoors, and you didn't have to carry stuff"—about as good a summary of a good job as you could ever ask.

He went on to host morning shows in Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Orlando before eventually moving back to Shreveport in 1996. That is when he first teamed up with his long-term cohost, Erin McCarty, to start their morning show that has been a part of Northwest Louisiana's morning commute for over 25 years.

He and McCarty moved their show and has been the "Townsquare" of Shreveport on KEEL ever since. To say that he will be missed is an understatement. Their show has been as much a part of many in Northwest Louisiana's daily routine as a morning cup of coffee. When you interview with Robert, it is clear you are speaking with someone who cares about the issues facing his community, just as much as usual. He has earned the time and trust of his listeners.

So congratulations to Robert J. Wright on an impressive and meaningful career. Robert, I can tell you there are many who are pretty upset about this news, and that is a testament to the positive impact you have had on our community.

Robert, we of Louisiana wish you a happy and well-earned retirement.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator for Iowa.

NOMINATION OF KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

Mr. GRASSLEY. Soon, we will be voting on Judge Jackson's nomination, and I would like to explain why I am voting against her appointment to the Supreme Court.

Since the White House announced Judge Jackson's nomination, I have emphasized the need for a thorough and fair process. Unfortunately, the majority party weren't concerned about the rigorous examination of her record. The White House and the majority party have shielded important information. We don't have any nonpublic document from her time at the Sentencing Commission, and the Obama White House held back more than 48,000 pages.

Judge Jackson also gave the White House confidential, nonpublic probation recommendations for some of her